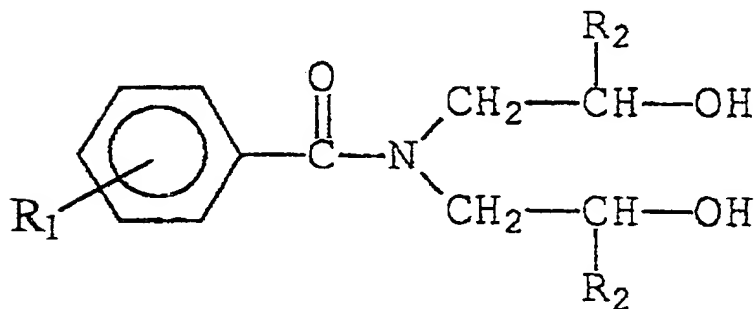


IN THE CLAIMS

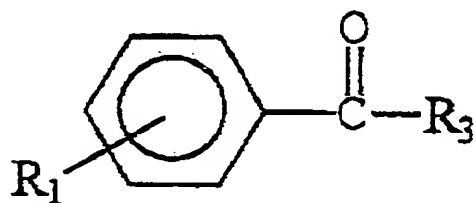
1-14. (cancelled)

15. A method of utilizing a β -hydroxyalkylamide having the general formula:



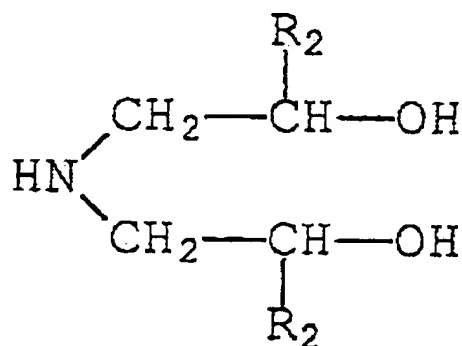
wherein R_1 is H or a linear or branched C_1 to C_{10} alkyl and R_2 is a linear or branched C_1 to C_5 alkyl to cross-link the polymer.

16. The method according to claim 15 wherein the β -hydroxyalkylamide is made from a process comprising reacting a carboxylic acid derivative having the general Formula II:



II

where R_3 is halogen or OR_4 , whereby R_4 stands for a linear C_1 to C_5 alkyl, with an alkanol amine having the general Formula III:



III

and where R_1 and R_2 are defined as indicated above.

17. The method according to claim 15, comprising mixing the β -hydroxyalkylamide with additional β -hydroxyalkylamides and/or epoxies as cross-linkers.